

Message Seven

The Highest Standard of Morality

Scripture Reading: Matt. 5:16-48

I. The expression of the kingdom is with the human virtues in the highest standard of morality—the standard of life that God requires—Matt. 5:16, 48:

- A. In particular, the expression of the kingdom is with the virtues of meekness, righteousness, mercy, purity, and peacefulness—vv. 5-10, 20.
- B. The highest standard of morality is the living of One—the Lord Jesus Christ—whose life is a composition of the divine essence with all the divine attributes and the human essence with all the human virtues—1:18, 20; Luke 1:35:
 - 1. The makeup of Christ's being, His constitution, is a composition of the divine nature with the divine attributes and the human nature with the human virtues.
 - 2. In Christ the divine attributes fill, strengthen, and sanctify the human virtues for the purpose of expressing God in the human virtues.
 - 3. Christ's human living was the living of a man who lived God to express the divine attributes in the human virtues.
 - 4. Christ is now seeking to live in us the kind of life He lived on earth—a life that is a composition of the divine attributes and the human virtues—John 14:19b; Gal. 2:20; 4:19.
- C. God's intention in His New Testament economy is that all the believers become a reproduction of Christ, living a life in which the attributes of God are expressed in the virtues of man—Phil. 1:19-21a.
- D. Eventually, through our growth in life we will be the same as God is in life and nature and live a life with the highest standard of morality for the expression of the kingdom in the divine attributes and human virtues—Matt. 5:48.

II. If we intend to live in the reality of the kingdom of the heavens, we need to practice the highest standard of morality as revealed by the Lord Jesus in 5:17-48:

- A. The highest standard of morality involves keeping the principles of the law—vv. 17-20:
 - 1. Christ's fulfilling the requirement of the law through His substitutionary death on the cross brought in the resurrection life to complement the law—vv. 22, 28, 32, 34, 39, 44.
 - 2. As children of the Father, we now need to fulfill the new, higher law by the resurrection life, which is the eternal life of the Father—vv. 9, 45:
 - a. This highest life, the life on the highest plane, within us can fulfill the requirements of the highest law.
 - b. In this way we keep the principles of the law to have the highest standard of morality for the expression of the kingdom—v. 16; 13:43a.
- B. In order to have the highest standard of morality, we need to overcome our anger and lust—5:21-32:

1. The new law of the kingdom deals with anger, the motive of murder—vv. 21-22:
 - a. We all are subject to dispositional anger, the anger hidden in our disposition—Jonah 4:1, 4, 9.
 - b. The root of anger is the self; in order to deal with anger, we must deal with the self—Matt. 16:24.
2. The new law of the kingdom recovers marriage back to what God designed in the beginning—5:27-32; 19:4-6.
3. Because of the anger and lust within us, we need to remain in constant fellowship with the Lord, receiving the divine dispensing and experiencing and enjoying the divine life—1 John 1:3; Rom. 8:2, 6, 10-11.
- C. The requirements of the highest standard of morality can be met only by the Father's life, not by our natural life—Matt. 5:48:
 1. The kingdom of the heavens is the highest demand, and the life of the Father is the highest supply to meet this demand.
 2. As children of God, we have a heavenly requirement within us demanding that we live on a high level; this level can be reached only by the supply of the divine life—vv. 9, 45.
 3. The requirements of verses 17-48 reveal how much the Father's life can do for us, the Father's children, having the Father's life and nature—1 John 3:1:
 - a. These requirements are actually an expression of the divine life, which is within the regenerated kingdom people—John 3:3, 5-6, 15-16.
 - b. These requirements open up the inner being of the regenerated kingdom people, showing them that they are able to attain to such a high level and to have such a high living—Phil. 2:15-16a.

III. For the believers to be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect is to be perfect in His love—Matt. 5:48; 1 John 4:8, 16; Rom. 13:10; Gal. 5:14:

- A. We must become perfect as our Father is perfect by loving the evil ones and the good ones without discrimination, loving our enemies and praying for our persecutors—Matt. 5:43-47.
- B. We have been born of God to be God's species, God's kind, and God is love—John 1:12-13; 1 John 4:8, 16:
 1. As children of God, we should be the same as God in our love for others—1 John 3:1; Matt. 5:44-45.
 2. As God's species, we should not only love others; we should *be* love because God is love—1 John 4:8.
- C. Only one kind of love is genuine, and that is the love which comes out of God's dispensing—Rom. 8:39, 35; 15:30; 5:5:
 1. When love as the nature of God's essence is dispensed into us, we become love in the sense of being constituted with God, who is love—1 John 4:16.
 2. The more we receive the divine dispensing, the more we react to others in genuine love, which is God Himself—Luke 6:27-35.
- D. Love is the most excellent way for us to be anything and to do anything for the building up of the Body of Christ—1 Cor. 12:31b—13:13; 8:1b; Eph. 4:16.